Opinion

Huskytalk | If you had the final say, what would you put in the removed space where the West Gazebo & Outside Volleyball Court used to be?



I would put the volleyball court back and put a pickleball court where the west gazebo used to be because there aren't enough courts around the west side of campus!

Gabriella Mouanes
Actuarial Science
3rd Semester Student



I would put a fountain in the middle and have food trucks come around the fountain area to foster community, studying, and good food.

Maya Vallejo
Math & Chemistry
3rd Semester Student



I would renovate the old gazebo and put the Christmas lights back up like they had a couple years ago to bring back school spirit.

Max Lane
Electrical Engineering
7th Semester Student



I would create a mini gold course! The Rec already has pickleball, volleyball, badminton, basketball, and other courts. A fenced mini golf course would be a great use of space and wouldn't affect any dorms.

Fiona Lin
Biological Sciences
3rd Semester Student

WRITERS, BREVITY: BEAUTY

by Hamza Zakir
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After four years in journalism, editing dozens of stories and working with talented fellow writers, I have come to an unfortunate, harsh conclusion many writers need to face: Your words are not as important as you think they are. Sometimes.

"Consistency. Clarity. Accuracy. Brevity." These are the guiding principles of Associated Press style, the writing standards and rules for journalism and more. Though I have developed a love/hate relationship with AP style (RIP parentheses, abbreviations and the Oxford comma), its principles exist for a reason. They are not arbitrary obstacles between writers and good sentences, but reminders that a sentence has a job to do.

At its core, journalism is functional writing. Headlines make statements, ledes catch readers' attention and the rest earns its space by telling a story. Though that architecture may be unromantic, it makes those words useful to readers.

I learned this gradually. When I began writing for my high school newspaper, "The Sidekick," watching my carefully composed sentences massacred under my adviser's fingers in minutes was painful. Surely the reader needed that description, that toiled-over transition or that clever turn of phrase. Oftentimes, the reader needed the next fact. When I became an editor, I found people frustrated as I cut paragraphs they spent hours writing. I understood their frustration, especially when criticism means seeing less of your work published, but also why those cuts were necessary — learning to accept that is part of becoming a better writer.

There is a particular vanity in assuming because a sentence was difficult to write, it must be worth reading. Effort does not entitle a paragraph, or even a few words, to space. Neither does elegance or flowery writing — a beautiful sentence that delays the point can still be a bad sentence, and a plain one can deliver exactly what it needs to.

This is not me arguing for stripping journalism of personality. As a former opinion editor, I would be beside myself not to defend voice in writing. Rhythm, humor and anger are what elevate a good column to a great one. I would be extremely hypocritical to demand otherwise, considering my own writing history that anyone could tear to shreds, including, probably, this article.

But there is a difference between having a voice and putting it before the story. Personality should serve the argument, not create entire paragraphs that exist solely because the writer thinks they sound nice.

Word counts are not cruel restrictions invented by advisers, editors and other equally malicious dictators to stifle creativity. They force writers to decide what matters. If you have 600 words for an argument or 500 words for a gamer, you must be able to determine which words earn their place. A journalist who needs 1,000 words to report the result of a golf game, barring the players beating each other to death with clubs or any other extraordinary circumstances, is a bad journalist — or one that needs practice.

Of course, brevity is not permission to butcher context. Cutting the facts that make a story accurate and important is a disservice to the people journalism should give voices to. Efficiency is not making sure every story is as short as possible, but making every word necessary. As writers, that is something we should strive for anyway: to be so confident in our words to know all of them are necessary.

Journalists owe discipline to the people whose lives fill our pages. Turning someone's grief, victories and struggles into text and sharing it is an intimate responsibility. Their experiences and truth deserve space before our egos.

Readers do not owe us their time or attention either; another sentence is not guaranteed. Good writers can communicate a story and ideas clearly and efficiently while being considerate of a reader's time.

Your words matter. Just not all of them.



COMIC BY JAMES CARLTON, CONTRIBUTING ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

THE TRANSGENDER GENOCIDE IS UNDENIABLE

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CONTENT WARNING: *The following article includes discussions of transphobic hate speech.*

In September, Pete Hegseth gave a speech stating the Department of Defense would have "no more trannies, just training." He was met with cheers. He followed this up a few days later with another speech, listing "trannies" among the kinds of people who will not be tolerated in the military. On Oct. 5, Donald Trump posted to Truth Social disparaging cisgender Democratic Senate candidate and pediatrician Annie Andrews with an anti-trans slur three times; he began his post with, "Annie 'Trannie' Andrews is running against our wonderful Darline Graham."

Both statements indicate attempts by two of the most powerful people in America to normalize the dehumanization of trans people. The worst part is that it's working.

"SNL" played a clip of Hegseth's "just training" statement live and uncensored in its season 52 premiere, while two episodes later, Shane Gillis had to apologize for letting the f-word slip before it could be bleeped. Annie Andrews didn't respond to Trump's use of the slur by showing support for trans people, instead choosing to release an ad stating she doesn't support "biological men playing women's sports" or "gender surgery for minors," leaving the slurs unquestioned.

The normalization of slurs is a terrifying new low for me and many other trans people, but dehumanization is nothing new. Every mass shooter is immediately labeled as trans with no evidence. We're described as pedophilic predators, rapists and terrorists. Slurs are just the next step in a genocide against trans people that has been progressing for years now, yet the concept of trans genocide is still a radical idea. It's plain to see that trans rights are under attack, but the idea of a full-on genocide is often met with dismissal.

Admittedly, the trans genocide perpetrated by the American government doesn't fit most people's understanding of genocide. We're not being rounded up in droves like how ICE is detaining immigrants and Latinos en masse or like Jewish people and the Gestapo. That kind of genocide is modeled by Dr. Gregory H. Stanton's "Ten Stages of Genocide," which describes how genocides utilize direct arrests and killings of a target group. However, trans genocide in America has, so far, focused on pressuring us to kill ourselves.

The three major goals of this genocide have included limiting knowledge of trans people, removing access to spaces for our preferred genders — e.g. banning trans women in women's sports and anti-trans bathroom bills — and removing access to vital gender-affirming medical care.

Lacking medical care is not an effective way to heal somebody. Without medical care, broken bones don't heal reliably, cancer kills, and trans people don't stop being trans. Gender affirming care can come in the form of medical care like hormone therapy and surgeries, but can also include everyday changes, such as new clothes, a change in hairstyle or being called by a new name. Even though small steps like these may seem inconsequential, they help us feel more like ourselves and less like what society forces us to be, and every trans person may need something different to be themselves. Without meeting that level of care, many of us fall into a depression that ends with suicide.

Anti-trans politicians support this. They want trans people to feel boxed in by our assigned gender at birth with no other way out, and by suppressing knowledge about trans people through "Don't Say Gay" bills and book-bannings, deny many trans people the opportunity of knowing and accepting that they're trans so that they can get the support they need. If we don't resort to suicide, we may instead choose to detransition, or transition back to our assigned gender at birth. This, too, furthers the genocide. If there are no more trans people, whether truly or just in practice, the genocide is complete.

However, this current method of genocide may not be the case for much longer. ICE has gotten rid of medical care and sexual assault protections for trans people and has stopped providing data on how many trans people are being detained by ICE. Earlier this year, a new counterterrorism strategy was implemented by the Executive Branch, targeting "violent secular political groups whose ideology is anti-American, radically pro-transgender, and anarchist," implicitly labelling all trans people as terrorists, which will be, "mapped at home... [and crippled] operationally before they can maim or kill the innocent."

Knowing that a genocide is here and is only getting worse, what can be done? If you know a trans person, treat them with humanity and kindness. Advocate and protest for us, donate to charities and, most importantly, vote in the upcoming midterms.

If you act now, there may still be time to save us.



Photo of protest sign. Transgender people have been the focus of recent legislation.

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